these drugs are regularly monitored and corrective measures taken where public interest is found to be adversely affected.

As a result of Government's efforts, Pharmaceutical industry had voluntarily agreed to reduce prices of 886 formulations. However, the availability of these formulations at reduced prices varies from State to State.

The Drug Policy as announced from time to time is directed towards making available quality drugs at reasonable prices to the poor.

Increase of medicine prices

†1978. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of increase in the prices of medicines during the last five years;

(b) whether the Central Government has been asked to grant permission for increasing the price of any medicine;

(c) if so, the details of permission given for increasing the price alongwith the name of medicines; and

(d) the details of those medicines of which the prices have come down or reduced during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The prices of 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are controlled in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95 by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA). Fixation/revision of prices of bulk drugs and formulations is an on-going exercise undertaken by the NPPA. Details of increase/decrease in the prices of medicines and their percentage of total packs during the last five years is as under:

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (upto 31st October, 2007)
	No./(%)	No./(%)	No./(%)	No./(%)	No./(%)
No. of Packs approved	506 (100%)	332 (100%)	1018 (100%)	1020 (100%)	394 (100%)
Price increased	23 (4.55%)	42 (12.65%)	99 (9.72%)	131 (12.84%)	37 (9.39%)
Price decreased	343 (67.78%)	131 (39.46%)	398 (39.10%)	340 (33.33%)	197 (50%)
Price fixed for the first time	134 (26.48%)	146 (43.98%)	480 (47.15%)	522 (51.18%)	154 (39.08%)
No change in prices	6 (1.19%)	13 (3.91%)	41 (4.03%)	27 (2.65%)	6 (1.53%)
TOTAL:	506 (100%)	332 (100%)	1018 (100%)	1020 (100%)	394 (100%)

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. Prices of these drugs are regularly monitored and corrective measures taken where public interest is found to be adversely affected.

Revamping of fertilizer units

1979. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the GAIL has asked the Department of Fertilizers to sound out fertilizers companies along the routes of the gas major's newly envisaged pipeline from Jagdishpur to Haldia to sign up for supply gas;

(b) if so, whether the now closed factories of HFCL at Barauni, Durgapur and Haldia, FCI at Gorakhpur, Sindri and Duncan at Kanpur have been instructed to sign up for supply of gas; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the future steps envisages for revamping of the plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Government has recently granted authorization to GAIL for laying Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline. In terms of the authorization issued, the pipeline must be commissioned within 36 months from the date of the start of the project, i.e. the date of publication in official gazette of notification under sub-section (1) of Section 3 of the Petroleum & Minerals Pipelines (Acquisition of Right of User in Land) Act, 1962 pertaining to land relating to the pipeline.

Further, the fertilizer companies willing to revive the closed units in this sector are already in discussion with GAIL for firm commitment/agreement for connectivity and gas availability. No agreement has been finalized yet.

Gas price

1980. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that RIL had invited bids from fertilizer companies to determine gas prices;

(b) if so, the names of fertilizer companies which participated in the bids;

(c) what are the indicative pricing benchmarks indicated by such companies; and

(d) the details of benckmark prices which are realistic for the fertilizer industry to be globally competitive?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The fertilizer companies which are participated in the bid are Rashtriya Chemicals and